

**CLAIMS**

What is claimed is:

5        1.        A method for regulating e-mail, comprising:  
              receiving an e-mail;  
              identifying a source of the e-mail;  
              updating aggregate e-mail statistics maintained  
for the source to reflect receipt of the e-mail;  
              10        comparing the aggregate e-mail statistics to  
target e-mail statistics; and  
              if the aggregate e-mail statistics are not  
acceptable in comparison to the target e-mail statistics,  
taking a remedial action.

15        2.        The method of claim 1, wherein identifying a  
source of the e-mail comprises identifying the domain  
name from which the e-mail was received.

20        3.        The method of claim 1, wherein updating  
aggregate e-mail statistics maintained for the source to  
reflect receipt of the e-mail comprises updating a  
counter of the number of e-mails received from the

source.

4. The method of claim 3, wherein comparing the aggregate e-mail statistics to target e-mail statistics comprises comparing the counter of the number of e-mails received from the source to a benchmark value for the counter.

5. The method of claim 1, wherein taking remedial action comprises sending an e-mail to at least one of the postmaster and administrator at the source.

10 6. The method of claim 1, wherein taking remedial action comprises returning the e-mail to the source.

15 7. The method of claim 1, further comprising identifying for the source, a corresponding source group having target e-mail statistics.

20 8. The method of claim 1, further comprising: identifying a profile of acceptable e-mail characteristics for e-mails received from the source; comparing the e-mail to the profile of

acceptable e-mail characteristics;

if the e-mail is not acceptable in comparison to the acceptable e-mail characteristics, notifying at least one of the postmaster and administrators at the

5 source.

9. A computer readable medium having stored thereon instructions for performing the method as recited in claim 1.

10 10. A method for regulating e-mail, comprising:

receiving an e-mail;

identifying a source of the e-mail;

updating aggregate e-mail statistics maintained

15 for the source to reflect receipt of the e-mail;

identifying for the source, a corresponding source group having target e-mail statistics;

comparing the aggregate e-mail statistics with the source group target e-mail statistics; and

20 if the aggregate e-mail statistics do not fall

within the source group target e-mail statistics,

notifying at least one of the postmaster and

administrator at the source.

11. The method of claim 10, wherein updating aggregate e-mail statistics comprises updating a statistic tracking e-mail volume received from the source to reflect receipt of the e-mail,  
5

12. The method of claim 10, further comprising:

10 identifying a profile of acceptable e-mail characteristics for e-mails received from the source;

15 comparing the e-mail to the profile of acceptable e-mail characteristics;

if the e-mail is not acceptable in comparison to the acceptable e-mail characteristics, notifying administrators at the source.

15 13. A method for regulating e-mails, comprising:

20 maintaining statistics regarding e-mails that are received;

comparing the statistics regarding e-mails that are received to benchmark values; and

if the statistics regarding e-mails do not comply with the benchmark values, taking remedial action.

14. A method for regulating electronic messages, comprising:

receiving an electronic message;

identifying a source of the electronic message;

5 updating aggregate electronic message

statistics maintained for the source to reflect receipt of the electronic message;

comparing the aggregate electronic message

statistics to target electronic message statistics; and

10 if the aggregate electronic message statistics

are not acceptable in comparison to the target electronic message statistics, taking a remedial action.

15. The method of claim 14 wherein the electronic

15 message is an e-mail.

16. The method of claim 14 wherein the electronic

message is an instant message.